# The Commonweal


No End in Korea?
*An Editorial*


*April 27, 1951*


*STRONG GERMAN OPPOSITION*

## *The Schuman Plan*

**JACQUES FLEHAT**

*"REVELATIONS" UNREVEALED*

## *Crime and Big Business*

**JOHN C. CORT**

## *Stones for Bread?*

**JULIE BEDIER**


*Volume LIV* **15c** *Number 3*



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ST. PAUL
PHIL. 4:6

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# • THIS WEEK •

Week by Week 51

The Schuman Plan
*by Jacques Flehat* 55

Crime and Big Business
*by John C. Cort* 57

The Stage
*by Walter Kerr* 58

Of Note 59

The Screen
*by Philip T. Hartung* 59

Communications 60

Stones for Bread?
*by Julie Bedier* 62

Books 65

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Published weekly, printed and copyrighted, 1951, in the U. S. A., by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y. MUrray Hill 3-9685. Entered as second-class matter, February 9, 1934, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. U. S. and Canada, $7 a year; Foreign $8. Single copies, 15c.

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The Commonweal

## WEEK BY WEEK

### NO END IN SIGHT?

SHORTLY after General MacArthur was dispossessed of his Pacific command, and while the resulting uproar was still running at high tide throughout the country, the General's supporters gave vent to their anger by badgering the President, demanding to know what he planned to do next in Korea now that he had removed MacArthur, who had become, in the eyes of many American newspaper readers, the paternal and protective figure of anti-Communist law and order in the Far East. It was a troublesome question to ask of Mr. Truman because, as everyone knew, there appeared to be no end in sight for the war in Korea. It seemed then, as it still does, that things might go on there forever as they are now, with the Chinese feeding battalions of Asiatic manpower to the waiting muzzles of UN guns and with neither side able to accomplish its objective; under these conditions the United Nations would be unable to restore order and establish the conditions of political independence throughout the whole of Korea, while the Chinese would be unable to push us off the peninsula. General MacArthur, so his followers argued, at least had an end in view; he was willing to extend the Korean war to the rest of Asia and fight the showdown battle there.

Behind the General's reasoning in this matter was his opinion that "the Communist conspirators have elected to make their play for global conquest" on the battlefields of Asia and we should, therefore, "join the issue thus raised" in Asia. To the President and his military advisers, this advice of MacArthur's was, and is, highly questionable because they feel that at this time Asia is really the secondary front and is being used by Russia as a deliberate decoy; an examination of the broader issues involved in the Korean war leads one to understand the very sound reasoning which compelled the President to reject MacArthur's view.

Like the Berlin blockade and the recent war in Greece, the Korean war has, of course, to be looked at as a local incident in a geographic sense only; in every other way it is an international affair, one episode in the over-all struggle between the Soviets and the free world. There is, really, no permanent solution to the Korean war on a local level; there may be a local victory or a stalemate, as there was in Berlin and in Greece, but the underlying and all-pervading world tension will not be dissolved by this local decision alone, any more than it was dissolved by what happened in Berlin and in Greece.

#### Core of Hope

It is necessary, then, to keep an over-all strategy in mind at all times and not to let any one local incident get out of hand and distract attention from that strategy. Our over-all plan, worked out over the past five years, is largely based on a serious weakness in Russia's ability to wage world war against the West: that weakness is her lack of sufficient supplies of two of the most vital raw materials of war, steel and oil. The Western plan is to do everything possible to keep Russia weak in those commodities as long as we can and to build up our strength in the meantime to such a point that the Soviets will not risk a world war.

Now Russia can get both oil and steel when she wants them in neighboring countries, and it so happens that to do this the Soviet military machine will have to face westward, because the oil is in Iran and the steel is in the German Ruhr. But here the West holds the trump cards at the moment. Because of the Atlantic Treaty alliance of nations, we have—or we will have in coming months, if the Atlantic preparations go forward speedily—air bases in Europe and in the Mediterranean from which we could, in the event of a world war, blast the oilfields, the Ruhr, and, most



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important of all, the faulty lines of rail and road communications between these points and Russia, thus denying the Soviets the very steel and oil supplies they would be seeking.

Since it is quite obvious that what the Soviets need and want most of all at this time lies in the European sphere and not in the Far East, the Administration, in the interests of concentrating our defensive strength in the West where it is needed most, has based its foreign policy primarily on the Atlantic Treaty, hoping to preserve the hard core of our defense and of our striking power in Europe and in the Near East, and hoping at the same time to cripple Russia's ability, in terms of oil and steel, to wage a world war. Our intention is in this way to forestall a world war altogether by making it too great a risk for Russia to take.

### The Great Decision

We know now that General MacArthur did not approve of this strategic plan; under his command, the local aspect of the Korean war was getting out of hand, so far, at least, as our over-all strategy was concerned. MacArthur's policy would have meant diverting much more of our power to Asia, a diversion which, in the minds of the President's military advisers, would have left us desperately weak in Europe and in the Mediterranean, consequently making it immeasurably easier for Russia to move against Iran and Germany in quest of the oil and steel with which she might eventually wage total war against us. Russia would then have won the great advantage of having secured the resources she needs while spreading our defenses thin around the world, and we in turn would have committed the blunder of not having concentrated our power in the one most decisive theatre of war.

Such, in its broadest scope, is the background of the present dispute between General MacArthur and the Government; this is also the background of the recent foreign-policy debate, set off by the Republicans, on the question of whether or not to make Europe the first line of defense. In Korea, the Administration itself created the foreign-policy issue anew for the Republicans because it had a hard but necessary decision to make: it had to limit the war to Korea, whatever the military disadvantages, in order to preserve our over-all strategic plan for resisting Russian world conquest.

It was a hard decision to make because in local terms there is no end to the fighting in sight. But that does not mean that we are not working toward any end at all; as in Berlin and Greece, if we hold on resolutely in Korea, we may very well force the Soviets and the Chinese to come to terms, because where global strategy is concerned we will have held tight to our bargaining advantages. We will, in other words, have forced the Soviets to negotiate or to give up the fight, as they have done before, because they will have been maneuvered into too dangerous a position, as they have been before.

### Not Inevitable

If, as an end to the war in Korea, we look on this prospect as a distant end indeed, it is only because we have forgotten, or never fully realized, what we have given lip service to, which is, that the struggle against Soviet Communism will be a long and terribly hard thing for all of us, whether we believe in the insanity of an aggressive, atomic massacre or a steady and strong resistance combining all the spiritual, military and material resources we have, in the hope that a non-violent solution can in time be found.

It may be that our hope of averting World War III by limiting the war in Korea will not prove successful. That is something that is not entirely up to us. After all, what we are trying to do in Korea is an extraordinarily difficult and delicate job: we are trying to defend the moral principle of collective security against unlawful aggression without provoking an atomic war. In this regard we believe it is utterly misleading to say, as Senator Taft said the other day, that [Mr. Truman] "has involved us in a major war which today has no purpose whatsoever." We do not agree with the Senator that an inviolable moral right—the right of collective security—can be worth fighting for in June but not worth fighting for in April.

## • NEXT WEEK •

MARTIN TURNELL'S article on André Gide will be one of the features of the Spring Book Number.

"What constituted his real distinction? When we glance at the varied list of Gide's published work, his range seems much wider than it was. He only had one really profound experience. It was his Protestant upbringing and his revolt against it, and it is the staple of his best work."



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The war in Korea must, then, be seen as part of our over-all foreign policy, which is designed with a very definite end in mind: and that is, to forestall World War III, without abandoning our moral rights and without appeasing Russia; we are trying to do this by concentrating our power at the point of maximum effectiveness in Europe, while at the same time upholding the moral framework of the UN in Korea.

No one can absolutely guarantee the success of this or any other foreign policy in meeting the complex and crushing situation facing us now, but certainly the present policy is the most reasonable one open to us and the best hope of maintaining the peace; as Pius XII said only recently, we need to remember that "nothing is lost by peace, everything can be lost by war."

And that, in the last analysis, is what all the MacArthur controversy comes down to. To have taken the General's advice about using "maximum counter-force" in China would have led almost inevitably to World War III, whatever he may say now about limited measures and limited risk. To Mr. Truman and his advisers, World War III is not inevitable and so they have decided to limit the war in Asia, hoping to limit war everywhere while we still have the chance to do so by following resolutely the strategy decided upon.

We support the President wholeheartedly.

## *Iranian Oil*

WHEN Foreign Minister Herbert Morrison reacted to the outbreak in the Iranian oil fields by promising to protect British lives and property, he spoke in terms that were commonplace three and more decades ago, phrases that used to herald the dispatch of American Marines in the heyday of dollar diplomacy.

A certain number of British men-of-war have set out for the Persian Gulf, but the likelihood of British armed intervention grows less as the unhappy flareup, which snuffed out nine lives, recedes into the past. The Iranian Government itself, which has vigorously protested the Morrison statement, has decreed martial law and dispatched troops to the area. The strikes there are subsiding and negotiation of oil workers' demands has been agreed to. But the fact that Britain would risk Russian intervention (specifically provided for in a 1921 USSR-Iran treaty) is an indication of the key importance of her oil sources in the Middle East.

Unless immediate (as opposed to long-range) self-interest has an inevitable faculty for beclouding the judgment, it is incredible that the British have allowed their source of this vital commodity to be thrown into such jeopardy. Up to a few months ago the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company could have assured continuance of its operations by raising the royalty rate and making certain minor concessions. The company doggedly held onto the old terms. Now Anglo-Iranian is finally willing to make all these "concessions." It is too late. The impoverished people of Iran have rallied to the cry of "nationalization." They will accept nothing less. It is one way that they can give vent to their deep-seated resentment of the extremes of wealth and poverty in their country. It is one issue on which the masses are united.

Aside from this nationwide sentiment among the underpaid, the unemployed and the destitute peasants—a determination to throw off foreign shackles with complete disregard for operational problems—there is support for anti-foreign ideas among the young intellectuals of Iran and throughout the strategic Middle East. Anti-imperialism flares high especially among university students.

As if this were not bad enough for the British, who are almost wholly dependent on this embattled area for their oil, the Communists in Iran are efficiently organized. They dominate the textile and oil workers' unions. They have a provocative press. They have won over half the university men. And directing all is the Tudeh, the Iranian Communist Party, the only political group in Iran with adequate organization and program. It is hardly a surprise that the Tudeh has been so successful in whipping up native resentments and aspirations.

In view of the feeling which has been aroused throughout the country — and in neighboring lands — Mr. Morrison's statement constitutes little more than a passing bow to a vanished order. The job now is to find a formula that will combine Western technical supervision with native control. The Teheran government itself says it wants the British to have the oil. American diplomatic and engineering experts surely will press this requirement upon the British, who the more they ponder the situation will recognize the need for a new set-up themselves. But as long as British, American and Iranian authorities permit the masses of the people to be bound by conditions of economic desperation, Iran will remain a powder keg.



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## *Catholics and Civil Liberty*

IN THIS issue we are calling a halt to a brief controversy on civil rights and the moral law which the editors have been carrying on with Father Raymond P. Etteldorf, editor of the Dubuque, Iowa *Witness*. It is the end of this particular controversy in THE COMMONWEAL, but, unhappily, the larger questions of Catholic respect for the American principle of religious freedom and civil rights are still far from settled in the public mind.

How prevalent the suspicion of Catholicism is in America may be a matter for dispute. Anyone who keeps in touch with popular opinion has to admit, though, that it is widespread and that the situation is considerably worse than it was a few years ago. This may be due largely to certain anti-Catholic publicists, to the temper of the times (Senator McCarthy is not the only one to profit from the atmosphere of uncertainty and confusion), or to a new awareness of the strength of the American Church. Whatever the cause, or causes, fear of Catholicism must be recognized as a fact of American life.

We who know there is no reason for fear may direct our more thoughtful fellow citizens to the writings of a Jacques Maritain, a Heinrich Rommen or a John Courtney Murray. At another level we may quote the patriotic utterances of bishops and archbishops and even the statements of recent popes which lavish praise on the US Constitution. At still another level, we may feel ourselves reduced to quoting the Army and Navy statistics on the number of Catholics in uniform, or to calling attention to the small number of Catholics suspected of Nazi or Communist-inspired disloyalty during the past 15 years. But whatever we say, the suspicion persists among many—and far too many to be dismissed as cranks and crackpots—that Catholicism is a quasi-alien force in the nation; a force to be tolerated, in the interests of democracy, but also to be watched and, if necessary, resisted.

Catholics are suspected of having strong totalitarian leanings, despite their noisy opposition to Communism (*vide*: their enthusiastic support of the Franco regime) and of being psychologically given to authoritarian political solutions.

However regrettable this situation, it is something we Catholics cannot ignore or dismiss with the one word "Bigotry!" The success of Paul Blanshard's first book was not an isolated phenomenon; it was grown on ground already well broken. His second book is soon to be released, *Communism, Democracy and Catholic Power.*

In the interim, Mr. Blanshard and his arguments have been answered again and again in the magazines and newspapers that Catholics alone read. Most of us have been satisfied that he was fighting phantoms, not realities; there has been no noticeable exodus from the Church as a result of his revelations. His name has become as familiar to readers of the Catholic press as that of Pius XII, and considerably more so than the name of Jacques Maritain. Millions of words have been spent "answering" Blanshard, yet few of them reached those outside the Church—the only people really affected by what he set out to do.

Actions speak louder than words. Our actions on the civil liberties question provide the final, compelling answer.

What is the story since Blanshard's first book was published? Well, there may have been hidden instances of Catholic devotion to the civil liberties of others, but what Americans read in their newspapers and magazines was not very reassuring. They read about "The Miracle" case. They read about the *Antho* case at Rutgers University. The forced suppression of "The Bicycle Thief," due to Catholic pressure. The successful efforts of Catholic groups to get the Chaplin films off television because Charlie Chaplin is said to be a Red. They read about the strong Catholic support enjoyed by Senator McCarthy and the fulsome praise given by American Catholics to the authoritarian regime of General Franco, which constantly shows up, some way or other, week after week, in the Catholic press, like the unceasing song of the angelic choirs.

In a period when civil liberties have been sometimes treated too lightly, we are sorry to say, newspaper readers found few instances of Catholics distinguishing themselves for their devotion to the ideals of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

This we can only regret. We know that there have been arguments put forth to justify every action named above. But in no case, we submit, did the action necessarily proceed from the official teachings of Catholicism.

What many non-Catholics object to in American Catholic life is not to be traced to a reprehensible dogma but rather to certain social, psychological and even political factors peculiar to us, not necessarily to our religion. That is why the public actions of American Catholics are so often a mystery to our more mature brethren across the seas.



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# *The Schuman Plan*

## In Western Germany the forces of opposition to the Plan are strong.

By JACQUES FLEHAT

IN MAY, 1950, the Schuman Plan was warmly and sincerely welcomed throughout Western Germany. It represented for the Germans the first serious chance to break out of the isolation in which they have found themselves ever since their defeat. The industrialists envisioned it as a means of getting back their lost markets. They believed that this plan would eventually enable them to direct, on the economic level, the course of a new Europe in formation. But soon afterwards they changed their minds. They did not like the concessions which were demanded of them, and then there were arrangements concocted by the other nations. So they thought it better to oppose the plan and to conduct their affairs without the Occupying Authority's having any part in them.

So on the 18th of March, when the evening papers announced that the Schuman Plan was going to be initialed, there was a hue and cry. Dissatisfaction was even stronger because people had been following closely the meetings between the American High Commissioner, Mr. McCloy, with Jean Monnet, as well as the visit to Germany of Robert P. Patterson, former Secretary of War of the United States. Soon after he arrived, Mr. Patterson, now an attorney of a German "association for the defense of stockholders," went directly to the "fortress" of the managers of industry in the Ruhr—the Industry Club of Dusseldorf—even before he met Mr. McCloy. He supported the policy of the Allies. To the Germans, this was the last straw; it will prevent the signing of the Schuman Plan.

The Germans who direct the Ruhr insisted above all on keeping intact the structure of their industry: the horizontal concentration of steel trusts and a vertical concentration through the link between coal and steel. They opposed above all the dissolution of the cartels for marketing coal, a system which for more than fifty years has given them their power to dictate. They therefore came right up against the determination of the Americans, who on this point have scarcely modified their policy since 1945—a policy which for once almost coincides with French interests.

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If the directors of the Ruhr had expected a turnabout as a result of Mr. Patterson's trip, they were due to be disillusioned. But it does not seem that they were laboring too much under illusions. The German-American compromise on decartelization was translated on the 14th of March into concrete terms by the dispatch to the Allied High Commission of a note outlining the results of negotiations carried on between German and American representatives. France, although directly interested, did not take part in these negotiations; she was content only to be kept in touch.

Three points were essential in this document:

1. Twenty-four steel firms will be maintained after decartelization.

2. Steel firms with a few exceptions will not be permitted to control more than 75 per cent of the coal which they require.

3. The cartels for marketing coal will be finally and definitively dissolved on the first of October, 1952. Two supplementary delays of six months each are provided for in cases where the common enterprise envisaged by the Schuman Plan would not be able to function on the date fixed.

This last point obviously allows considerable leeway for a number of clever manipulations.

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THE plan could therefore be initialed. Will it be approved by the federal German parliament? That is another story. Not only are the powerful industrialists against it but also the labor unions, who are afraid that it will jeopardize the co-determination system which they have won after a long, hard struggle. It is likewise opposed by the German Socialist Party, which protested violently against the breakup of the coal-marketing cartel.

At Copenhagen, on the 18th of March, Carlo Schmid, a Socialist and vice-president of the Bundestag, attacked the Schuman Plan. But Carlo Schmid, despite his debonair and optimistic mien, has only a small following in the German Socialist Party. What basically most disturbs the Socialists is not so much certain technical aspects of the plan as its French origin.

The German Socialist Party is a rigid party, held in tight leash by an executive bureaucracy—and woe betide the functionary who deviates



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from an order handed down from Hannover headquarters.

There is practically no connection between German and French Socialists. Hannover regards France with distrust; the French Socialists in its eyes no longer constitute a force to be reckoned with. Attlee, on the other hand, Herbert Morrison and the Labor Party, are much closer to the German Socialist chiefs, who are not at all impressed by the deals "in the corridors" carried on in Parliament by French Socialist members.

German management and the workers' organizations—unanimous public opinion, as the *Frankfurter Allgameine* delights in saying—are therefore opposed to the Schuman Plan, which has been described by the *Deutsche Zeitung*, which is close to industry, as a "grand cartel imposed by force." It is reproached first of all for being controlled by a "high authority" with exorbitant powers. (This criticism has likewise been made with equal force by French industrialists, as their German colleagues now make a point of emphasizing.)

1. The high authority is all-powerful and consequently may favor whom it will in the distribution of raw materials at a time of crisis.

2. The plan is the best means of lowering for decades the politico-economic influence of Germany.

3. This plan seeks, above all, to work in Germany's disfavor.

4. The standard of living of the German worker will suffer.

In short, the solution is satisfactory to no one. Let us have no illusions about it: Western Germany will not accept this caricature of the Schuman Plan. She refused the original version because it was too severe in character. She refused the compromise version because she is conscious of her strength (does not her productive potential represent 45 per cent of the potential of all the nations taking part in the plan?). She also is conscious of her key importance in the international struggle.

There are already complaints about Chancellor Adenauer because he has submitted to "heavy pressures." Then, too, we might wonder how many of the agreements scheduled to be signed soon will still be in force a few years hence. But one thing is certain: Western Germany claims that she has been forced to adhere to the plan in opposition to her consent, against her will.

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A FACTOR in all this is the state of the German economy. In spite of her debts, Germany obtained last November from the European Payments Union a new credit of one hundred and twenty million dollars. The federal German bank promised that the deficit would be made up. But, contrary to these promises, the deficit has increased and Germany now owes France a hundred and twenty-five million dollars. This deficit is primarily due to an excess of imports over exports and the rise in the cost of raw materials which has resulted from the war in Korea. It would be wrong not to stress the fact that France has been limiting her imports of German manufactured goods, while Germany has opened her markets wide to French agricultural products.

To meet this crisis and obtain new credits from the European Payments Union, an austerity program has been set in motion at Niederbreisig, near Cologne, by the experts of the Federal Republic. It includes limitation of imports (those from France will be reduced about one quarter), investment of more than seven billion marks in industry to increase production and exports, removal of restrictions on synthetic production from coal and integration of Germany in the Allied defense production program.

Here is a program which, all in all, might be reduced to this: let there be freedom of production to forestall a collapse! A curious reminder of the interval between the two wars.

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ANOTHER factor is the meeting of the four deputy foreign ministers. This "conference on Germany and without Germany" has not made a favorable impact. In certain political circles people have even wished it to fail: a prolongation of the present period of insecurity would be preferable to an agreement between Russia and the West which would be made over a prostrate Germany.

The Chancellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Adenauer, won unanimous support when he announced to the Federal Parliament on March 9th that his government had sent a note to the Western Powers requesting them to include in the agenda of the Four Power conference, the organization of free elections throughout Germany. But the conditions that he proposed were such as to threaten the whole Four Power conference.

Bonn is carrying out a German policy, and one that is only German; she threatens to make the problem of reaching international agreements even more bitter. The great majority of the West German people wishes to be part of Europe, that is factually true. But the German leaders have their own ideas, which cannot be shared by the other partners on the Continent. For a new Europe must be constituted by partners who have equal rights and equal duties. It must not become the sphere of influence of any single member under the pretext that that country's industrial potential entitles her to exercise such sway.



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THE LABOR MOVEMENT

# *Crime and Big Business*

THE MILLIONS of Americans who sat transfixed before their television sets watching the Kefauver hearings were doubtless impelled by many motives to neglect their work, their washing and their children.

One of these was certainly the warm feeling of self-righteousness that such a spectacle inspires in all of us. "O God, I thank thee that I am not like the rest of men—racketeers, greedy, corrupt politicians—or even like this Costello. I play the numbers but once a week and as for the bingo on Wednesday nights, that's in the church hall and is practically the same as charity."

Our newspapers have been having a grand time for themselves, puffed up with editorial alarm like great pouter pigeons, cooing and moaning over the Democratic office-holders who permit such things to be, but not saying much about the Republican ones.

Even less have they said, however, about the businessmen who have not only permitted such things to be, as on the waterfront, but have even employed these goons and racketeers, or made contracts with them, for their mutual profit. Businessmen, especially when they are what is called "well-known businessmen," are more fortunate than Caesar's wife. They not only should be above reproach; they are immune from reproach.

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THE KEFAUVER committee has brought out a number of curious things about the relations between industry and the underworld. Back in the 30's another Senator headed a committee that brought out even more dirt along this line. But I suppose that most people figure that revelations of the LaFollette Committee were simply symptoms of an age that is gone. In those days, they say, unionism was new and strange to big American industry and you cannot blame the industrialists too much if some of them reacted violently to labor's attempts to close their open shops.

Ford had his Harry Bennett and Harry, who was only one step removed from a gangster himself, hired gorillas straight out of the hoosegow in order to beat up the impudent organizers who thought that it was time that democracy invaded that citadel of American totalitarianism. And so you had the Battle of the Overpass, among other engagements, which some photographers recorded in film. It was a nice lesson in mayhem: the goons approaching Walter Reuther and Frankensteen quietly and as if for polite conversation, three of them grabbing Frankensteen suddenly and pulling his coat up over his head and arms so that he could neither see nor strike his assailants, and then while two held him bent double, a third getting around in front to slug him at will in the face with murderous uppercuts.

Ford called these bully boys his Service Department and Bennett held forth there for many years, even after Ford had decided to make his peace with the Auto Workers. Now we have the reign of Henry II, a constitutional and Catholic monarch. But I know of no newspaper which has called the king to account for his dealings with the Automotive Conveyance Company, which is a creature of Joe Adonis, one of the top operators of Crime, Inc.

Unfortunately, the dirty business that went on in the time of Senator LaFollette has not been abandoned by U. S. industry. Take the fascinating matter of the scrap contracts awarded by what *Business Week* calls "two large Detroit companies": the Detroit-Michigan Stove Co. and the Briggs Manufacturing Co.

John Fry, president of the stove company, told the Kefauver committee that his company gave a contract for disposal of the firm's scrap to one Sam Perrone, an ex-convict, although Perrone was not, and is not, by Fry's admission, "paying anywhere near the current scrap price." This first happened shortly after an independent union, charmingly called the Mechanics Educational Society of America, had tried to organize the place.

The law caught up with Perrone, who seems to have had other interests beside scrap, and he spent six years in jail. But when he was sprung, as the boys say, there he was back at Detroit, Michigan, collecting scrap and breaking up a drive by the United Auto Workers.

Perrone also had a son-in-law named Carl Renda. Fortune smiled on this boy with an even sunnier benevolence. Briggs gave him a scrap contract too, although at the time he was just "a young tool-maker, with no scrap experience or equipment and not even a telephone." But then Renda didn't need such pedestrian qualifications. He simply bought the scrap and sold it at once to another company which had held the Briggs contract for 18 years. This company removed the scrap from the Briggs plant and disposed of it. Or did he buy it? Come to think of it, I don't recall that word being used. At any rate an official of Briggs told the Kefauver Committee that the company lost $14,000 a month on the scrap deal.

Not a bad profit for an inexperienced young man who did nothing but buy and sell. Or at least sell. But what did Briggs get in return? Kefauver charges they got "strikebreakers and gangsters" in return. The UAW charges that these gangsters are responsible for the vicious lead-pipe beatings of Briggs employees.

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LEST YOU think that such things happen only in such barbarous Mid-Western regions as Detroit—where, incidentally, the men who tried to kill, and did successfully maim, the Reuther brothers are still at large—we have also some Kefauver testimony involving a respectable and well-bred Eastern firm like the Phelps-Dodge Copper Co.



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Phelps-Dodge had a bad strike at its Elizabeth, N. J., plant in 1946. Conveniently, it was already doing business with a stevedoring company headed by Anthony Anastasia, brother of Albert. Albert was formerly (formerly?) head of Murder, Inc.

Anthony seems to have been cut from the same sturdy cloth as his brother. He received $1,000 a day from Phelps-Dodge, by his own statement, for the services of some "35 or 40 thugs armed with pistols, rifles, baseball bats, iron shackles and other weapons."

About the shipowners and stevedoring firms on the New York waterfront we have no space to speak here in detail. Their craven, if not collusive, tolerance of racketeers on their piers is one of the greatest scandals of American industry. Kefauver has only rippled the surface of this cesspool.

But for such "revelations" most of the daily press has no stomach. Before it died the New York *Sun* tried to do a job on the waterfront and some good came from its exposures. The ACTU and a number of valiant priests have been trying to clean it up for years, even though a number of waterfront unions have been involved.

For years too the ACTU has been blasting corrupt elements in the labor movement and doing what it can to drive them out of business. I know of no employers' organization—Catholic or otherwise—which has waged even half as vigorous a campaign against the use of criminals by business.

There is no room here for self-righteousness.

## Something You Can Do

MENTION of the ACTU reminds me that a short time ago I was horrified to learn that this valiant little organization — the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists—is so hard up for funds that it may have to lay off some of its already tiny staff.

On April 22 the New York ACTU celebrated its 14th anniversary at a Communion Breakfast. Without fanfare or profit the ACTU has done something about Communism. Its members have met the Communists where they were, in the unions, and in a great many cases have bested them at their own game and driven them out of the seats of power. So also with the racketeers, at great risk to life and limb.

It should make any decent person boil with anger to think that such an organization languishes and grows weak for lack of funds while noisy and worthless ones prosper and grow fat. Some months ago I asked for contributions to the Textile Workers for their Southern campaign. The Textile Workers have enough money and returned the contributions. I apologize. But I promise COMMONWEAL readers that any money they send the National Office, ACTU, 226 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y., will not be returned. If you can only spare $2, ask them to put you on the mailing list of *The Labor Leader,* ACTU newspaper. For your charity you will learn some interesting things.

JOHN C. CORT.

# The Stage

## NIGHT MUSIC

IT IS ONE of the policies of ANTA—the American National Theatre and Academy—to encourage off-Broadway activity, and ANTA's current decision to sponsor an Equity Library Theatre production no doubt comes under this heading. The Equity Library Theatre is a non-profit organization which has, for several years past, offered otherwise unemployed actors a chance to work at their trade and thereby improve themselves.

I hadn't seen an Equity Library production before, but this presentation of Clifford Odets' old play is, in the light of ANTA's decision, presumably one of the better ones, and a fair sample of the organization's work. It came as something of a shock, therefore, to discover that so far from improving themselves as professional performers, the actors were busily engaged in perpetuating one of the worst vices of the amateur theatre. They were giving imitative, rather than creative, performances, modeling their characterizations on the work of actors they had seen in the professional theatre. The spectacle of earnest and eager young semi-pros giving earnest and eager imitations of Elia Kazan and Lee Cobb—actors associated with the Odets-Group era—was a distressing one, not because they had chosen poor models—Kazan was one of the most exciting young actors in the business before he switched careers—but because they had assumed that this was a way to learn acting. It is one thing to develop a general acting style, as Kazan is now doing at the Actors' Studio, in which each performer adapts certain principles to his own use; it is quite another to impersonate a specific actor, to borrow wholesale that actor's own successful fusion of principle and personality. Eli Wallach and Marlon Brando, for instance, are unmistakable Kazan products and they share certain points of style, but they remain distinct personalities and could not conceivably be mistaken for one another. Several of the principal performers in "Night Music," however, were doing their best to *be* mistaken for their models, and mistaken they were. What is worse, some of them showed signs of talent—talent which is being paralyzed rather than developed by their current practices. If the derivative nature of these performances is in any way characteristic of the Library theatre as a whole, it is doubtful that ANTA's encouragement is warranted. We are always big-hearted about encouraging any manifestation of non-commercial interest in the theatre; actually, we need a double policy of encouragement and *dis*couragement, a policy of selective and highly critical assistance, if we are not merely going to increase the ranks of the unemployed and make some of our more deplorable practices widespread.

The acting performances made it difficult to see the play: I was so fascinated by Rod Steiger's meticulous duplication of every Lee Cobb mannerism that I found it difficult to break through the impersonation to the writ-



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ten character, found it difficult to follow the story for the comparisons which the actors were constantly calling to mind. Even so, though the play is not a very good one and the production was without inherent vitality, the evening was of some interest. It served to remind us that the current—and, I think, hopeful—tendency toward a more poetic realism is really Mr. Odets' invention, and that both Miller and Williams remain indebted to him. It also pointed up the fact that Odets himself has lost something of his original inspiration: "The Country Girl" is an infinitely better-constructed play, but its language is somewhat flat alongside the earlier flair for earthy imagery. In addition, the production helped to bring into focus the familiar clash between direct observation and superimposed ideology: alongside a really striking image, formed out of his personal experience and observation, the author would again and again set an abstract conclusion, a political interpretation. The juxtaposition was embarrassing, as always—in this case the more so because of the perspective we acquire on an out-of-date play. (*At the* ANTA *Playhouse*)

WALTER KERR.

# Of Note

## *Catholic Leadership*

FROM an article on American Catholicism by Christian Meyer in *Vita e Pensiero* (Via L. Necchi, 2, Milano, Italy).

> In general, American Catholics are very well organized, too well organized perhaps. They have their own magazines, books, publishing houses, parochial schools. There are, of course, degrees of liberalism among them, as they reflect all the differences found among European Catholics. But they are too rich. One kneels on rubber pads in an American church. The churches themselves are comfortably heated. Their priests ride around in automobiles. One wonders if it is even possible for this country to understand the meaning of poverty, of humility, of suffering. . . .
>
> American Catholicism is not yet strong enough to play a determining role in public life. It is not strong enough to meet the challenge stated by an American Catholic writer when he said: "The United States still appears to the world as a storehouse of industrial marvels. It is certain, however, that we will not make friends merely with food-packages. It is certain that we cannot appeal to European and Asiatic countries which have profound spiritual traditions, by merely pointing to our industrial excellence."
>
> This belief is slowly gaining ground. When it is finally convinced that it is true, American Catholicism will have enormous possibilities for the future; without it, American Catholic leadership is impossible.

# The Screen

## PERILS AND PEARLS OF PARENTHOOD

THE MOVIES have turned up with a couple of comedies kidding and extolling parents—no doubt because so many people are parents who enjoy being kidded and extolled and are willing to pay at the box office for the privilege. Actually, although *"The Mating Season"* is supposed to be very funny, I found most of its jokes rather flat, mainly because so much of the plot hinges on a trick that isn't funny at all. In this case a bride and groom, played with typical Hollywood radiance and good looks by Gene Tierney and John Lund, find their lives awfully complicated with the arrival of their respective mamas. Gene's is a mess—a socialite snob played by Miriam Hopkins who looks down her sharp nose at the man who dared marry her daughter. John's is a lovable, lower-middle-class dame played by Thelma Ritter with hearty gusto. Since Gene has never met Thelma, she mistakes her for the new maid and finding her full of efficiency and bright ideas around the house, she hires her at once. The plot's gimmick, which must disturb all parents in the audience and sons and daughters of parents too, is that John doesn't admit that Thelma is his mother; he lets her act as maid; and later, when the story tries to make us like John, it fails miserably as we only remember what an ungrateful son he was. Of course in the meantime Thelma has stolen the movie, and the best comedy scenes in the film are hers. In fact the only thing about "The Mating Season" that might win you to it is Miss Ritter's superb performance as a lady who knows how to take adversity in stride and can always land on her feet.

★

MOST of the fun in *"Father's Little Dividend"* stems from Spencer Tracy's delightful portrayal of an indignant father. He's not annoyed with his beautiful daughter (Elizabeth Taylor) or his two younger sons—but with his son-in-law (Don Taylor). Hitting the ceiling when he learns the news, Spence grumbles: "First he steals my daughter; then he makes me a grandfather." Actually Tracy isn't so much upset by his son-in-law as he is by the little frustrations caused by normal people and life in general. He just can't understand why people do the things they do: why his wife (Joan Bennett) and Don's parents (Billie Burke, Moroni Olsen) make such a fuss about his pregnant daughter; why friends cash in with presents at the stork shower, "one form of robbery not punishable by law;" why Don looks at Elizabeth as if she were a time bomb; and why everyone acts so silly over naming the baby, talking baby-talk and then cooing over an infant that looked as old as Methuselah when he was born. In other words, this sequel to "The Father of the Bride" goes right on where the first picture left off; and surprisingly



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enough it's just as funny. Of course you have to accept the usual coating of Hollywood slickness and patness, but you'll find that "Father's Little Dividend" will make you laugh. Director Vincente Minnelli deserves much of the credit for this; and so do the writers whose script continues the characters of Edward Streeter's original novel; and so do several other people including the fine cast headed by the wonderfully indignant Mr. Tracy. I probably give away no secret by telling that before the end of the film Father turns to putty in baby's hands.

★

THERE are a couple of new war comedies on our screens now, and while war and fun seem a strange mixture, they should provide a few laughs—especially to the experienced soldier. Bill Mauldin's cartoons about the infantry in World War II have brought forth many a laugh. Some of his original jokes and much of his realistic dialogue have been retained in *"Up Front,"* a movie that stars his two leading characters, Joe and Willie. But some of the fun has disappeared from the actual visualization of these two famous soldiers. David Wayne and Tom Ewell portray the boys with sufficient imagination and homey touches; but they have to wander through so many cliché situations in this rambling plot set in Italy that the film almost dries up from over-familiarity. "Up Front" won't exactly bore you, but neither will it give you the fresh bang of Mauldin's once-timely sketches.

★

IF YOU'D like a good escapist movie, one that offers plenty of legitimate escape, we recommend *"Kon-Tiki"* with all flags flying. Made by Thor Heyerdahl and his five companions on their famous Pacific voyage, this documentary has none of the polish of a studio-made job, but it does have so much authenticity that you feel as if you were floating right along with the boys as their raft hits every wave. Readers of Heyerdahl's book may be a little disappointed that so many of its most exciting scenes are not in the film; but let these readers remember that this movie is the real thing, and the six Scandanavians hardly had time to manipulate a movie camera when their raft was in danger of being upset by a broiling Pacific. (You'll wonder who ever named *that* ocean.) The most fascinating parts of the film are those that describe the day-to-day living: what the men ate and did on this raft for 101 days. Perhaps these scientists did not prove the Polynesian Islands were once populated by South Americans, but they did prove that a balsa raft could make the trip. You can make it too by seeing "Kon-Tiki." PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

NEXT WEEK
The Commonweal's
SPRING BOOK ISSUE

# Communications

## *Civil Liberty and the Moral Law*

Dubuque, Iowa

TO THE Editors: You stated in your editors' note to my letter on "Civil Liberty and the Moral Law" that I "consistently miss the meaning intended by the thirty-nine ministers" [a statement made by a group of ministers during the "Miracle" controversy].

I wrote in my original editorial that the statement of the ministers involves a fallacy. They said that "the right of a person to decide for himself whether or not he wishes to view any film, whether it is good or bad, religious or sacrilegious, is guaranteed by the American Constitution."

You introduced the element of subjectivism. Not only did I base my position on the objective moral law, or natural law, to which all people are subject, whether Jew, Protestant or Catholic, but I showed that the ministers *de facto* had in mind the violation of the moral law. The specific example which I cited was sacrilege, not as in "The Miracle," but as a violation of the first of the Ten Commandments, which express the natural law. I explained that there is a vast difference between civil laws permitting evil and granting the right to do evil. But apparently you do not accept this explanation. You say that in the United States men are legally free, that is, they have the legal right, to "be immoral, blasphemous, sacrilegious or even wrong."

In the book, *Jurisprudence,* by Francis P. LeBuffe, S.J., and James V. Hayes, Fordham University Press, I find: "All true legal rights are ultimately based on natural rights just as all civil law is ultimately founded on Natural Law and is law in so far as it is so founded."

The authors quote Robinson (*Elements of American Jurisprudence*): "Hence whatever rights the State confers on individuals or asserts for itself in the fulfilment of these duties, though in form they may seem technical and arbitrary to the last degree, nevertheless, derive their existence from the same law of nature as the rights which they assert, and are determined even as to their form by events and conditions which likewise owe their origin to the same natural law."

You made a big point of the civil law's not interfering with individuals who break the moral law and that you would not join in any attempt on the part of the State to stop such individuals. I cited the fact that the mind of the Church does not exclude the tolerance of evil on the part of the civil government. But this is not the same as giving people the legal right to do wrong or protecting them in violating the moral law.

Civil liberty should not mean the civil law protects individuals in their violations of the moral law. For the mind of the Catholic Church on this I refer you again to Pope Leo XIII who in his encyclical *Immortale Dei* wrote: "Liberty is a power perfecting man, and hence



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should have truth and goodness for its object. But the character of goodness and truth cannot be changed at option. These remain ever one and the same, and are no less unchangeable than Nature herself. . . . Whatever, therefore, is opposed to virtue and truth, may not rightly be brought temptingly before the eye of man, much less sanctioned by the favor and protection of the law."

I believe, of course, that liberty of conscience, a natural right, is guaranteed by the Constitution. But this is not the same as saying it grants one the license to do what is wrong.

I could cite Catholic authorities who maintain that the Constitution *de facto* recognizes the natural moral law. Space does not permit, however.

Regardless of how individuals interpret the Constitution, the matter resolves itself to this: either (1) the Constitution does not *de facto* grant citizens the legal right to violate the moral law, or (2) the Constitution claims to guarantee Americans the legal right to do wrong.

If (1) is true, the ministers would be wrong in fact. If (2) is true they would be wrong in upholding a false principle. On the basis of Catholic teaching, as expounded by Pope Leo XIII and developed by authorities on the philosophy of law, I can only reiterate that the statement of the ministers remains a fallacy.

(*Rev.*) RAYMOND P. ETTELDORF.

AND we can only reiterate what we said, too: "The power of the State should not be used to enforce the particular moral code or interpretation of any minority . . . the Constitution guarantees the individual citizen the *right* (emphasis added) not to be so coerced."

It might be well to say what we understand by a civil right: the right which a state's inhabitants enjoy by law, as distinct from natural rights, which a man enjoys by virtue of being a man.

The civil right in question is not essentially the right to commit sacrilege, nor does the civil right of an atheist confer the right not to believe in God. In both cases what is in question is the citizen's right to be guided by his own conscience, or even to reject the bidding of his conscience, without being interfered with by the State. This civil right is based on the natural right, liberty of conscience.

In the United States it is not a question of "tolerance" of moral evil or religious error, but rather of official "indifference."

"Under the [American] conditions, the State does better to become religiously neutral; i.e., the state gives full religious freedom, retires from any positive or negative intervention into the religious life of its citizens. And it does so simply as a matter of political prudence and as the protector of the common good. It abstains from any judgment about religious truth; it abstains from intervention, not because it adheres to the theory that all religions are true or false. Its practice of religious freedom and separation is mere policy exercised in the interests of the common good without any pretense of indifferentism as a philosophical or theological principle. . . ." (Heinrich Rommen, *The State in Catholic Thought*. Herder).

Again Francisco Suarez (*De Legibus*. Chapter II, Number 8): "The private moral conduct of individuals as such is not the concern of civil laws; these laws are concerned only with that virtue which aids, is necessary for, or very useful to the common good."

This controversy began when THE COMMONWEAL criticized Father Etteldorf's statement: "The Constitution does not guarantee anybody any right to do what is wrong," by implying that he should have made "a further distinction between the Thomistic notion of the moral freedom of the individual and the civil liberty guaranteed by the Constitution."

It is a distinction we cling to. If Father Etteldorf were to make it, we think it would be apparent we are in closer agreement than may have been suggested by this exchange. With this we close the discussion.

THE EDITORS.

## *The Pope and Peace Negotiation*

Chicago, Ill.

TO THE Editors: Many times I have heard it said that Pope Pius XII should have been invited to the peace negotiations after the War. Usually the statement has seemed to me to be inspired by a misplaced loyalty to the Holy Father and a misunderstanding of the nature of the Church, its relation to the temporal order and to the political institutions for maintaining the peace.

When a man has read the Papal statements as extensively as Msgr. Koenig also expresses regret that the Holy Father was not invited [THE COMMONWEAL, April 13], there is cause for serious re-examination. Still I wonder: has Msgr. Koenig found any indication in the statements of Pope Pius XII that the Pope regrets he was not invited, or that he would have attended even if he had been invited?

If I have understood what I have read in recent Papal pronouncements, I would judge that the Pope is the last man in Christendom who would want the Pope to be at the peace negotiations.

Whether the Russians wanted him there or not I do not know. If they were smart I should think that they would have. But at any rate I should think that sincere Catholic statesmen would not have wanted him there either. First, because they would not want to put him in such a compromising position. Secondly, because the direct application of Christ's principles to the political and social order is a responsibility given to the laymen themselves. (*Rev.*) DANIEL M. CANTWELL.

## *Day of Infamy?*

Troy, N. Y.

TO the Editors: On Wednesday, April 11, the newscasts carried the report of President Truman's removal of General MacArthur from his four commands.



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My telephone began to ring. Voices of my fellow parishioners screamed into my ear, about the terrible crisis, the defeat of everything Christian. Prayer was not enough, I was told. Now we must *fight*.

Came evening of that day. I had not yet finished my examination of the history of the case but I took time out to attend a meeting of a local Catholic group sponsoring the review of a best seller to be given by a priest. To my astonishment, the introduction to the speaker of the evening developed into a first class political speech on the Truman-MacArthur controversy. Since the topic of the evening had nothing remotely to do with the international situation, my astonishment grew. Happily, the priest speaker discussed *only* the best seller.

By Friday I had made my decision as to my personal convictions concerning the controversy. It was then that my weekly copy of a Catholic newspaper arrived. The whole front page was given over to an editorial entitled, "Second 'Day of Infamy'," the whole illustrated by a cartoon of General MacArthur, in heroic stance, upholding "American prestige." All my uneasiness grew. Pearl Harbor was the "First Day of Infamy" as I recalled. And now according to the Catholic press, we had suffered another such day.

Then this morning I pick up a copy of the New York *Times* and on its front page I find some quotations from *l'Osservatore Romano*. Included among them are such statements as this, regarding the Truman action:

That President Truman had by his action proclaimed a "desire for peace," that the affair had "ignited a discussion between the two parties that monopolize the great majority of the American electorate," that President Truman, "has placed himself above contingent party interests with a gesture to ease the situation," and, finally, "Unfortunately, it seems that the reply to Truman's gesture comes only with propaganda which, however, will not change the facts."

*At last,* I had found that for which I had been looking, a pronouncement that recognizes propaganda where it finds it, no matter what the guise. I had found what I always thought I should find in the Catholic press, a searchlight, picking out from every situation, fundamental truths.

My decision now taken in this controversy is mine and not one I wish to foist upon any other American, Catholic or non-Catholic. I just wish I could encounter that same respect in contacts with fellow Catholics, not to mention in reading the Catholic press. For several months now, even before this present crisis, I have been observing a growing tendency in the Catholic press to engage all too heatedly and ill-advisedly in the field of partisan politics. We *do* have other means, it seems to me, of combatting Communism. . . .

I am trying to forget now both the screaming vituperations of my fellow Catholics as well as "Day of Infamy" editorials. But I am not having much success. I *want* to believe that we have and support a Catholic press dedicated to the Truth. But I can't help wondering.

MARGARET P. KILCAWLEY.

# *Stones for Bread?*

By JULIE BEDIER

WHEN I was a little girl, hearing a story about someone who had lived on bread and water, I decided to try it. I took a bowl of clear cold water, broke up bits of bread in it, and did my best to down the mess. Resolution: no more bread and water. However, saints in their hermit cells and prisoners in their dungeons have lived, sometimes for years, on bread and water. Not only that, but rigorous fasting was widely and successfully practiced during Lent, in ancient and medieval times.

Lent is still supposed to be a time of fasting, but how many are able to keep it? In my home parish, I remember, there was an old woman, a seamstress, who was said to be a saint; she kept the "black fast" all through Lent. Nobody else that I knew kept it. Working men and their families were excused, and most people were in that class. People with desk jobs could not fast, because they grew faint and suffered headaches. The teaching Sisters could not fast while at the same time keeping up classroom work and discipline. Some of the clergy may have fasted; certainly some were too sickly and overworked to do so. And so, who kept the Lenten fast? Only old Mrs. O'Reardon.

After I grew up and spent some years in China as a missionary nun, I began to think the Lenten regulations for China were more sensible than ours. In that country there are only eight fast days in the year—the Fridays of Lent and Christmas Eve. Eight fast days, and every Catholic keeps them. Even the poor coolies pulling rickshaws for a living kept the fast, and kept it more rigorously than we Sisters did. The Chinese Catholics ate nothing at all until noon, whereas we took the usual piece of bread and coffee at breakfast time; the Chinese were able to outdo us, somewhat to our humiliation.

Francis Thompson, in his essay "Health and Holiness" speaks of the exuberant vitality of his hardy ancestors, compared with the "existing valetudinarianism of our oversoft bodies"; of the medieval men clad in iron mail, who fought through the Crusades in the torrid lands of the East—while modern soldiers in kahki fall out by the hundreds during mere maneuvers on an English down.

In this connection it seems apropos to mention the experiences of our soldiers in Korea, brave and hardy youngsters, but needing rest and hot chow at regular intervals—and their own wonder at the Red Chinese

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who can fight all day and all night, and all the next day without rest, while using for food only a few cold cornmeal cakes or millet dumplings which each man carries with him. Here the less modernized Chinese might be compared to Thompson's medieval Crusader. It never occurred to Francis Thompson, nor does it occur to many of us, to lay the blame for our modern lack of stamina where it belongs. Weakness of will? Of piety? Not at all. The faintness, the dizziness, the failure of the body are not imaginary; they are real and have a real cause. The experiments of a few scientists and investigators, independent and widely scattered, give the clue to those who care enough to think it through.

★

MAN, while being practically omnivorous, is largely a grain-eating creature. Down through the ages, bread, or its equivalent, has been his staff of life. Nations have grown great and strong where wheat prospered. "Give us . . . our daily bread" meant just that. However, the bread of ancient and medieval peoples had no relation to the modern bakers' bread which is given us today. I have eaten the "black bread" of the Russian peasant, and it is a meal in itself; dark brown, solid and heavy, "chewy" and moist and utterly delicious. You can feel and taste its substantial goodness with each bite. After that, try a slice of modern white bread, and you might as well be chewing on a nice tender paper towel. Bread and water—peasants' black bread and water—could indeed sustain life. I should hate to try living on white bread and water for any length of time.

Our Food and Drug Administration has recently ordered bakers to stop using chemical "extenders" and "emulsifiers" which take the place of the milk and butter formerly used in homemade bread. However, the inedible trash added to the flour in bakeries does not make all the difference. It is the flour itself that is devitalized and anemic. Much of our wheat is grown on soil lacking in essential minerals. Year after year, crops are taken off the soil and nothing put back. Nature demands a return of services, and when she is flouted, she cannot be blarneyed or propagandized; she gives what she gets. She is most just. Crops grown on deficient soil are deficient crops.

Next, the wheat, formerly cut and allowed to dry in shocks before threshing, is now "combined" in the field before the grain is well ripened. Stored at once in huge elevators, it has to be protected from weevils by having cyanide gas blown through it. Then it is milled at a high rate of speed, at high temperatures in our modern mills; the old-fashioned millstones, grinding slowly, did not destroy vitamins so efficiently. The flour is then refined, separated from the bran which contains minerals and vitamins so necessary to life. After refining it is usually bleached with chemicals. some of which have been proved very injurious to health. Then it may be stored for long periods before it is used for bread.

Wholewheat flour is difficult to keep for any length of time, as weevils breed in it and it is soon discovered to be "buggy." The refined white flour does not get "buggy," and for a good reason. The insects know which flour is fit to eat; and with their God-given instinct they choose the foods which will sustain life and avoid the worthless ones.

We moderns are so convinced that our diet is the most scientific, our standard of living the highest in history, that it comes as a shock when we are told of the great numbers of young men found to be unfit for our armed forces on account of poor health. It is true we eat a great deal of meat, sweets and out-of-season vegetables and fruits, these latter often of poor quality from long storage and shipping after being half ripe when picked.

If we did not have these additions to our diet we should be badly off indeed, as our bread surely would not sustain life by itself. No amount of our added foodstuffs however can take the place of whole grains. Man needs grain in his diet, and he needs plenty of it. The shame is that there is a kind of conspiracy to prevent his getting it. There is "whole wheat" bread on the market, to be sure, but this "whole wheat" is only a trade name, having no foundation in fact. There are people who, refusing to be pushed around, have developed a mighty wrath and have taken to grinding their own wheat in small kitchen grinders and baking their bread from the grain fresh ground. These people are few, but the number is growing. Their enthusiastic testimonials and their relish for the plain brown, fragrant wheaten loaf are eloquent.

★

IN THE Himalaya Mountains in India, near the border of the USSR, is the land of Hunza, shut in by towering mountain peaks. It is a dry country, where farming is done by means of irrigation. Farm land is scarce and is made up of little patches on stairstep terraces carved in the mountain sides. Crops are therefore scanty, and winters are cold and bleak. The Hunzukuts, who live there, are a hardy race of mountaineers, light of skin and with handsome features and figures. They are intelligent, cheerful, lovers of dancing, at which they are skilled, and expert polo players. They are peasants and herders, and few of them can read or write.

Hunzukuts sometimes die by falling down mountain peaks, but seldom from disease. They have no doctors or hospitals, take no medicines and seem to need none. Colds, appendicitis, stomach troubles, heart disease, cancer, "nerves" are unknown among them. They live to be from eighty-five to a hundred or more, and pass away from old age. The only ailment they seem to know is some eye troubles, caused by smoke from the fires in their little houses. Fuel is scarce; they are like the American Indian, who said, "White man build big fire, sit 'way back; Indian build little fire, sit close to."

Hunzukuts often walk sixty miles at a time, up and down steep mountains, carrying heavy loads. A Hunzukut of seventy plays a fast game of polo, on foot, and is not winded. In the evening, after a day of burden-bearing over mountain trails, perhaps in drenching rain, Hunzukuts often have a gay dance around a fire. One Hunzukut messenger made a two-hundred-mile journey over the mountains, on foot. He returned in seven days,



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quite untired and fresh. The people of Hunza are very cleanly. It is a custom among them, in winter, to make two large holes in the ice of a pond, then dive in at one end and come out of the other, over and over again, quite as cheerfully as a polar bear.

Why are the Hunzukuts so hardy? A group of scientists made a study of them and their habits, and their findings are interesting, to say the least.

The Hunzukuts live entirely upon natural food which they raise themselves. No canned, frozen, or preserved food processed in factories ever reaches them. Their bread is made from whole wheat, grown at home, freshly ground in the home and baked there. They use no sugar, no candy, no ice cream or bottled drinks (which contain much sugar). Their food is made up of wheat, barley, millet and buckwheat, of vegetables, nuts and butter, of apricots, mulberries, apples, grapes, peaches and pears, together with a small amount of meat from their herds of goats. They do not peel their vegetables, but eat skin and all. They raise all this food on soil which they keep fertile by nature's means; that is, they put all vegetable, animal and human wastes back into the soil after composting them.

The scientists decided that the food habits of the Hunzukuts might be the cause of their fine health and good dispositions, because other people living nearby in the same climate, but having different food habits, were both unhealthy and quarrelsome. However, the inquirers wanted to be sure. They then experimented with three groups of rats, which were kept in cages in a laboratory. One group was fed upon the food of the Hunzukuts. Another group was fed white rice, vegetables and spices —the diet of the poor of Southern India. The third group got white bread made from factory-milled flour, margarine, tea with sugar, a little boiled milk, cabbage, potatoes, canned meat and jam. This was the "white man's diet"—the food of many working people of England, and of some in America.

The diets were kept up for several years, and the observers were startled by what they saw. The "Hunzukut" rats had no illness, no deaths, were fine, sleek, handsome, tame animals with good tempers. The "Southern Indian" rats were diseased in nose, ears, heart, stomach, lungs—in every organ. They had poor teeth, developed boils, lost their hair, and were quarrelsome and wild. The "English" rats also had most of the same diseases. They were nervous, often tried to bite their caretaker, and killed and ate the weaker rats among them.

★

WHILE considering the advantages of grain in diet, the following experience of a group of Maryknoll Sisters seems particularly significant. Throughout the war years these women, five in number, lived in a large city of Manchuria where they conducted a school. First under the Japanese, and later under the Russian occupation, food grew daily scarcer. When ordinary meat, fruit and vegetables, dairy products and canned goods became unobtainable, the Sisters, with considerable good sense, bethought themselves of the food of the Chinese poor—kaoliang, the seed grain of the Manchurian sorghum plant. This grain is widely raised by the Chinese in the north, as it will thrive where rice cannot be grown. Farmers, laborers and beasts of burden eat it.

Kaoliang is simply threshed and winnowed, then boiled as a kind of porridge, and eaten with a sauce or vegetables. The Sisters bought bags of this sorghum grain and began to use it in the traditional way. As they took in numbers of destitute refugees, they fed the refugees on the same fare as they themselves used. For two and a half years they lived on kaoliang mush, sometimes adding a little seaweed, some grass or a few leaves of cabbage, and rarely a bit of fish for flavoring. The amount of these other items was negligible. Kaoliang was their "daily bread" indeed. The five Sisters found that their health was excellent, in spite of having to live through two Manchurian winters of sub-zero weather with practically no heat in the house. They contracted no illness of any kind during this period. Their eyes, teeth, nerves and general health improved under the diet.

In time, even the kaoliang became scarce and hard to buy. As the number of refugees increased, the Sisters felt considerable weakness and hunger, since the portions of sorghum porridge had to be much watered to go round for all. The unpalatability, too, was hard to bear, as the boiled grain with salt and grass or seaweed would hardly be listed among the hors d'oeuvres at a banquet.

Each missioner had a hard day's work to do, teaching in the classroom, and a mile to walk each way to and from school. Constant fear of raids and brigandage also kept them on edge. In spite of all they came out of the ordeal in good health and spirits. The Sisters learned by experience why the Chinese coolie has such strength and vigor, comparatively speaking, in spite of his poverty, lack of sanitation and medical attention, and his crowded living conditions. They had done well on the coolie's "daily kaoliang." The wholesome vitamin-rich grain had been practically their only food for two and a half years.

What does all this prove? It seems at least to point the finger at a crime being committed against us all, against our health, our vitality, and against our children. No wonder we cannot keep the Lenten fasts, if the food we do eat has lost its power to sustain health. It is a situation that cries to heaven. However, like the weather, nobody does anything about it.

## Appeals

A reader writes to say that she regrets that we gave no addresses for the Berlin refugees, described by Dr. Charles R. Joy in his recent article, or for Nomadelphia, mentioned by Gunnar D. Kumlien, in the April 6 issue. CARE, 20 Broad Street, New York, N. Y., and with many local offices, will dispatch food and clothing packages to Berlin. Contributions for Nomadelphia (I and II) may be sent to Don Walter, Piccoli Apostoli, Citta' di Nomadelfia, Carpi (Modena), Italy. THE COMMONWEAL itself forwards donations for any place referred to in its pages.



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# Books

*The Nice American. Gerald Sykes. Creative Age. $3.*

THE nice American is Harlan Childress, a young colonel stationed in Algiers in 1945. He was an engineer before the war, but he is no man to judge a people by the state of their plumbing. A discerning friend called him "a Roman with a Greek sensibility," for he has an awareness of beauty and a yearning to express himself artistically. He has compassion, too, and respect for people, and a high sense of principle.

But in 1945 he is in a dreadful muddle. His entire future—the war is almost over—is involved in a choice between two women. Jeanne is a beautiful and cultured French woman. She offers Harlan understanding and opportunity for self-fulfillment in a world that appreciates beauty. But Mollie, the self-assured American, represents a challenge, a call to duty. Glib, narrow, willing to compromise with any ideal in her drive for success, she nevertheless is part of his hard home-grown destiny.

Or so Mr. Sykes tells us. For his people are wooden and unconvincing, manikins for the display of the author's views on politics, morals, and culture. Despite all the biographical data, Harlan turns out to be the Well-Meaning Liberal, Jeanne is civilized Europe, and Mollie is adolescent America. Even the descriptions of the exotic North African countryside remain a string of black words on white paper. Mr. Sykes often seems like a narrator at a puppet show, explaining the antics of his animated symbols.

Actually much of the narration is worth listening to. Mr. Sykes makes perceptive comments on American foreign policy: "[The Americans] had only 'education' to offer them [the Arabs], and a kind of American education that had been the product of an entirely different history and land and people. Even if it were a perfect education, which no one claimed for it, it would have to be taught by teachers who could make a warm human contact with the pupils, who could make them want to learn. And that kind of teaching required love and deep intelligence." "The Russians were obviously due to become whipping boys. Thus he and she would never feel unduly troubled by a sense of responsibility for the world's troubles, which could always be conveniently pinned on someone else. It was one of the handiest rewards for being partisan, enabling one to call others corrupt or incompetent and inducing deep slumber at night." The essence of the narration is the need for personal responsibility. The individual, as well as the nation, must learn tolerance and humility and self-discipline and respect for principle.


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Since there is a story-line—Harlan's symbolic choice between the two women—a certain amount of suspense is generated. But the single thread of plot wears thin. Harlan keeps trudging indecisively back and forth between the goddess of beauty and the symbol of duty, the other characters stand around making intelligent conversation waiting for the outcome, and Mr. Sykes interprets and comments and explains. Despite the author's technical competence, this is hardly a novel, for he is more interested in the message than in the little figures who act it out. *The Nice American* is a collection of observations on modern life, sincere and soundly conceived, but in fictional terms it has little more emotional impact than the North Atlantic Treaty.

CAROL H. WEISS.

*The Tolstoy Home. Tatiana Sukhotin-Tolstoy. Translated by Alec Brown. Columbia University Press.* $4.

WE ARE presented here with the diaries kept by Tolstoy's oldest daughter between the years 1878 (when she was thirteen years old) and 1910, the year of her father's death. These diaries were desultorily written, and there are sometimes wide gaps between the occurrences described. There is a refreshing candor in the glimpses offered of life at the Tolstoy country estate, and of the great man himself. Also the dilemmas of girlhood and young womanhood are described here with the simplicity and naiveté of one as yet inexperienced and unaccustomed to the sophistications of cultured society. It is a troubled heart that has written this book.

The heartaches which the young Countess suffered were perhaps inherent in the situation. It is obvious that the quarrels between Papa Tolstoy and his wife contributed no little to the spiritual discords in the young. Tatiana, quite apparently, had a great affection for her father, and was inclined to side with him. She thought he could do no wrong, and she tried to live life as he taught it. "I always agree with what he says," she writes when she is about eighteen. "I am astonished when people argue with him: in my opinion, everything he says is so clear, so rational and logical. . . ." Three years later she quotes from a letter his views on marriage. He urges that people who intend getting married should have a common purpose in life, and that they should devote their life to having children and to service. Commenting on this, Tatiana laments that Papa should exclude joy from the union.

The writer herself constantly suffers from uncertainty. She meets this man and that, each time to meet with disillusion. In the end she falls in love with Sukhotin, who already has a wife, and, because of a long gap in the diaries, we are not allowed to know how they overcame this difficulty in order to marry as they did. An unhappy book, this.

JOHN COURNOS.

*The Burned Bramble. Manes Sperber. Doubleday.* $3.95.

IT IS DIFFICULT to determine the artistic value of *The Burned Bramble*. That, fortunately, is a relatively unimportant question. The novel stands on its own as a superior work of propaganda. A subtle propaganda, however, not confined to the methodical peeling off of the idealism utilized at one time by the Russian Communists. At its center the novel is not a story of political disillusionment but a plea for the ex-Communist, no longer capable of working either with the Party or with any of the elements which oppose it. It is ironic that Silone's famous comment, "The world belongs to the Communists and the ex-Communists," should be followed by a number of fine novels based upon the complete solitude of the ex-Communists. Silone's remark is nevertheless true: the ex-Communists have conquered a sizable part of the literary world. This is not said in any derogatory sense. It would be criminal for any thinking person to ignore the necessary handbooks which the ex-Communists have written.

The novel is the story of three leaders of the German Communist Party from 1931 to 1937. After Soennecke and Vasso, his two closest friends, are killed in the Moscow purges, Doino manages to escape to a neutral country with his old professor, a character very much like Thomas Mann's Settembrini, with whom he hopes to start again in the search for an absolute to which to dedicate himself. Apparently, the principal motivation for Doino's communism is his hatred of any government which deprives the worker of justice and dignity, and his dislike of all organized religions, which are for him vast, impersonal organizations. It is easy to understand this motivation, especially his craving for a just attitude toward the working man (although in practice the Weimar Republic was much fairer in this respect than has been commonly believed) and his simplicistic resolution of the relationship of the believer to the Church. One aspect, however, remains highly problematical: Doino's acceptance of the economic interpretation of history, an indispensable theory of Marxism. This theory is such that it can be accepted only by very simple souls, knaves, or Communists whose political creed has retained a peculiar religious overtone of Marxist thought: the belief that economics is more than man's exploitation of his brother, that in some way it is a malevolent power destroying man's freedom. Doino is neither simple nor a knave. He is religious, of course, but that religion is almost identified with morality, so that it never has speculative independence. Thus, throughout the novel there is the constant puzzle as to how Doino could have arrived at or accepted that interpretation of history. Perhaps Mr. Sperber's plan for a trilogy will make this clear and make a virtue of this defect.

Apart from this difficulty, the novel is uniformly excellent. Two events stand out particularly: the rapidity with which the Russians took over the German Communist Party, and the widespread feeling even then among thinking groups that Nazism



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and Communism would be but stupid, futile gestures.

This is a serious and depressing novel. A very good one. A very modern one. Not recommended for readers of Saroyan.

SERGE HUGHES.

*Return to Paradise. James Michener. Random House.* $3.50

THOSE social failures who have to face their tearful children and admit they haven't yet seen "South Pacific" have some hope left. If Rodgers and Hammerstein don't find enough material in James Michener's new book for at least three new shows as good as the great hit they made from his Pulitzer Prize-winning *Tales of the South Pacific,* they ought to be indentured to some Tahitian frangipani plantation owner. *Return to Paradise* is, however, much more important than a source book for Broadway producers and authors.

Michener looks like a gentle assistant bookkeeper. But the most romantic literary beachcomber never had a more robust imagination, livelier curiosity or gayer sense of the ludicrous. With them he amassed an abundant collection of intriguing facts and observations about the islands and inhabitants of the South Pacific—Polynesia, Fiji, New Zealand, Australia, the New Hebrides—and their present significance for the United States. Michener is too good a writer to let this mass of information pop out aimlessly.

As further insurance, he has adopted the unique device of following each essay on some island with a short story based on a theme in the essay. And these generally excellent stories illuminate the factual material that went before as clearly as any scientific probing. They are marked with the same irony and compassion that distinguished the famous "Tales," but are even richer and subtler, since Michener has gone beyond the problems of the American fighting man away from home, to more complex issues. "The Jungle," for example, a compressed yet intricate, chilling story of an eroding American marriage in an alien atmosphere, is a small masterpiece. Sex figures prominently in the stories, but it is done without smirks and seems only to reflect the lush and fecund surroundings. After all, South Sea islanders have basically the same problems as Cleveland suburbanites. They only face up to them a little differently.

Michener conveys the beauty and color of the islands, sensitively and perceptively. More than that he carefully, imperceptibly, without grinding any axes, reaffirms the human dignity of even the most primitive savage and our responsibility to respect it. This is most welcome now, when the peoples of the world are suddenly being "discovered" by Americans, variously as customers for creature comforts, decimal points in a Point IV program, birth control prospects, sandbags against Communism or, eventually, votes.

PAUL V. FARRELL.


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*At Swim-Two-Birds. Flann O'Brien. Pantheon.* $3.

THANKS to the publicity untiringly poured forth by numerous addicts like myself (I have read Flann O'Brien's book with delight at least half-a-dozen times in the dozen years since it was first published in England), it is now making its first appearance in America. But how is an addict, lacking the powers of a Baudelaire or a De Quincey, to convey to the as yet unensnared anything of the true nature of his artificial paradise?

For me at least, Flann O'Brien best reveals his genius by the painstakingly wooden frame within which he has confined his wildly surrealist painting. The young Irish author of the story, when he is not giving capricious twists to the already hopelessly embroiled activities of the progeny of his imagination, lives the seediest student life conceivable. For instance: he begs some money from his uncle to buy a book for his German course, bets it on a horse, wins, and, with two of his pals, gets puking drunk on the winnings; naturally, he never gets around to buying the book. The studied flatness of the writing in all such episodes reminds us of similar passages in Joyce's *Dubliners* and *Ulysses*.

O'Brien (his real name is Brian O'Nolan) writes utterly faithful dialogue, preferably with a Dublin inflection. When the narrator's uncle demands, as he frequently does, "Tell me this, do you ever open a book at all?" or, when the narrator's friend Kelly says, "Do you know what I am going to tell you, a pint of plain is your only man," we realize that such locutions could flourish in only one city of the world.

"A pint of plain is your only man" later becomes the refrain of a hymn to plain porter, the humbler brother of Guinness's Stout, recited by one of the fantasy characters; in its place, contrasting sharply with some poignant lyrics by Sweeny, the mad king of legend, this piece of "proletarian" verse becomes one of the book's chief *tours de force*. The narrator carefully sees to it that a number of the *dramatis personae* in his fantasy are cast to speak the same kind of Dublinese.

Among those simultaneously present in the more crowded scenes of the fantasy are: the Pooka MacPhellimey, "a member of the devil class;" a Mr. John Furriskey," born at the age of twenty-five;" Finn MacCool, "a legendary hero of old Ireland;" the Good Fairy; and Slug Willard and Shorty Andrews, two cowboys who ply their trade in Ringsend, a more-or-less slum neighborhood in Dublin noted for its dockyard and fishermen.

The Good Fairy, along with some of the attributes of Tinker Bell, enjoys the distinction of being a highbrow and a political reactionary. In a hilarious game of poker she loses to the Pooka and forfeits all claim to influence a child that is about to be born—the offspring of a rape committed by an author upon one of his own heroines. Another peak of fantasy is the scene in which Shorty pulls a six-shooter on Sweeny, who


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Like the ballad of "Frankie and Johnnie," *At Swim-Two-Birds* has no moral; it does, however, have an end—three of them, to be exact. Furthermore, it has the same number of beginnings. The conscientious reviewer feels that he should supply three reviews — favorable, unfavorable and on-the-fence—in an effort to cope with his author's versatility. If he cannot find it in him to do that, he should urge the author to write three more books—not like *At Swim-Two-Birds*, for that would be impossible, but equally funny. Finally, if he despairs of arousing Mr. O'Nolan from his present bureaucratic torpor (the man is a permanent civil servant in Dublin), he should urge each of his readers to buy three copies, confident that at least two of them will fall victims to larceny-by-borrowing.

VIVIAN MERCIER.

*The Build-Up Boys. Jeremy Kirk. Scribners.* $3.

THIS NOVEL about the advertising world is a puppet-novel about puppets in which the puppeteer is also a puppet, since "Jeremy Kirk" is a pen name. A part of the game is to guess who is finally responsible for the performance, and this is indeed more fun than the novel itself. This reviewer's guess is Elsie the Cow. Or Electrothink, the latest IBM contrivance. Or the third cubicle on the right of the fourth corridor on the thirty-second floor of the Universal Advertising Agency.

The difficulty about so impersonal a creation is that nobody can believe a word of it, including Elsie the Cow. Nor can any of the characters believe in themselves or in each other.

Curiously, it would seem that the appalling emptiness of the book is not due to lack of talent or skill in the anonymous author, who is intelligent, informed, and witty. Rather, it would seem that the unconvincing whodunit inhumanity of this effort derives from the impossible moral dilemma in which the author places himself. Prostitution of any kind is a dull and empty business. If you're in it, about the best you can do with it is to clown it, the way the girls on San Francisco's Barbary Coast used to do. They put signs over all their beds reading "What is Home without a mother?"

You can't crash the gate of art by writing an anonymous book, revolving around the repeatedly hypothecated moral axis, but signed "Blue Eyes" to retain your professional status, and with a jacket blurb referring to your patrons and associates as "all round good guys."

Wakeman wrote a crude and bawdy book in *The Hucksters;* the author appeared to share some of the moral confusions of his characters. But he genuinely hated the racket. What he wrote about it, hurt; and he signed it, thereby losing his professional status with a lot of "all round good guys."

Elsie the Cow is a less venturesome animal. She likes her stable and can stand its smell.

JAMES RORTY.

## • REVIEWERS •

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# A Point of View VI

## The Case for Tolerance

HISTORICAL reason should be one of the main sources of any theory of intolerance. Looking to history, we readily see that intolerance has a legitimate function, since by its means, effect is given to community law. But intolerance readily expands its claims until it seeks to compel the human mind to conform to one rigid type, or hypocritically, to profess a conformity it does not in fact experience. Some limits, if only in the interests of common safety, must be imposed on intolerance. History is the source of these limitations.

It is no longer legitimate to approach the matter of intolerance solely on terms of formal logic. And it is the teaching of historical experience that, however perfect the logical case for intolerance, especially intolerance of religious propaganda, intolerance has been a principle author of the most deep-seated hatreds which have divided man from man and nation from nation. Only in very late times have forms of intolerance, closely related to politics, arisen capable of matching in fervor the hatred generated in the past by religious intolerance.

The guarantee of religious freedom which finally gained place in the Constitution of this country was no child of logic. It was derived from historical understanding. But the gains made by historical understanding should be no less permanent than those achieved in the natural sciences. It is just as important to civilized life that men should believe in the doctrine of religious freedom as it is that they should believe that the earth is round. As the modern geographic idea on the shape of the earth adjusts itself to real fact, so also religious freedom, including the civil right to worship as one chooses and to propagate what one believes to be religious truth, adjusts itself to the historical facts of human life, thought and experience.

History is strewn with the social shipwrecks of societies based on the principle of religious intolerance. When such societies have not been destroyed they have tended to assume petrified forms and in the end to perish by way of ossification.

God made man to be free; else men are animals. Freedom is manhood. The area of human freedom should never be so narrowed as to make the fear of man's force and ostracism the substitute for self-responsibility and the fear of God, which are alone the beginnings of all wisdom.

JAMES N. VAUGHAN in The Commonweal, May 9, 1941.

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# • THIS WEEK •

Week by Week 75

Andre Gide
*by Martin Turnell* 79

Tito's 'Ministry of Love'
*by Gunnar D. Kumlien* 81

Main Street, Mississippi
*by John Hay* 83

Communications 84

The Republicans' Impeachment Threat
*by Francis Downing* 86

The Stage
*by Walter Kerr* 88

The Screen
*by Philip T. Hartung* 90

Culture In Fragments
*by Serge Hughes* 92

Of Note 94

Books 96

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Published weekly, printed and copyrighted, 1951, in the U. S. A., by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y. MUrray Hill 3-9685. Entered as second-class matter, February 9, 1934, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. U. S. and Canada, $7 a year; Foreign $8. Single copies, 15c.

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